

# SOLID INSIDE WASTE

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/  
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE



Spring 2003

Volume 34

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Benjamin  
Lucha  
City of  
Santa Clarita



Talk about teamwork! Jason Smisko and Benjamin Lucha from the City of Santa Clarita put a whole new meaning into the term dedication. They are a two-person team that provides environmental services to the 158,000 residents of the City, not to mention the 50 square miles of land Santa Clarita covers.

Jason is the Interim Environmental Services Manager and Benjamin is an Environmental Analyst, and together, they provide valuable services for their residents. Aside from offering a curbside recycling program, household hazardous waste curbside pick-up and two free bulky-item pick-ups per year, Jason and Ben work diligently to provide Santa Clarita residents with as much environmental education as possible.

Through in-class presentations, Jason and Benjamin give school children the knowledge to help clean up their community. They provide presentations upon request and keep active by making appearances at community events, along with the City's environmental mascot – COREY. COREY was created to attract the younger audience within Santa Clarita and serve

as an environmental steward on behalf of school children of all ages. Children's activity books, pledge cards for residents and businesses to complete, and many other informational guides help with educating residents.

As we can see, Jason and Benjamin currently oversee a variety of successful environmental programs in Santa Clarita to help keep the community clean, but recently, the team embarked on an entirely new and innovative recycling program

Didn't think you could do much with diapers? Guess again. The City has found a way to dispose of those smelly, unwanted things in an environmentally friendly way. Santa Clarita launched their pilot Diaper Recycling Pilot Program in November and will monitor the program during a six-month period.

Families were selected according to their geographic location with demographics similar to the City as a whole. Households were located through a survey looking for homes with children under the age of three years old and their willingness to participate in the pilot. There are approximately 230 participating single-family homes that receive a 34-gallon container to place the diapers in. The trash hauler collects the diapers during the residents' regular trash day and delivers them to the processing location.

Jason and Ben plan to evaluate a number of factors once the six-month project period comes to an end. The participation rate of the project, the tonnage collected, the setout rate (the measure of participating residents that set out the bins for collection), and the cost for providing the services are all key indicators to determine whether or not the program will continue to be offered.

With the diaper-recycling program keeping them busy, you'd think Jason and Ben would not be able to find time to create other groundbreaking recycling efforts. Surprisingly, the team's enthusiasm to help keep Santa Clarita clean is endless.

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**JOIN THE TEAM:** Anyone interested in participating on the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Public Education Subcommittee or if you would like to submit an article for *Inside Solid Waste* please contact **Emily Montanez** at (626) 458-3579, or [emontanez@ladpw.org](mailto:emontanez@ladpw.org). Quarterly meetings are held at the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Headquarters to discuss and review upcoming newsletters. If you feel you have something to contribute why not become a member of the Subcommittee?

# A Plug for Re-Refined Motor

There's a lot of debate among car enthusiasts about which motor oil to use. But the fact is re-refined oil may be the best choice of all by reducing our dependence on foreign oil, conserving natural resources and energy, eliminating waste—and it's the same high quality as virgin oil. Moreover, re-refined oil is available in a variety of blends suitable for different types of gas and diesel engines. It's even used by Mercedes Benz to fill new cars at their factory! So if Mercedes Benz prefers re-refined motor oil, why aren't more people using it?

First of all, re-refined motor oil is not well known or understood by the general public. Many people perceive it as "dirty" or inferior to virgin oil and think it would void their engine manufacturer's warranty if they were to use it. This is a myth because each of the three major U.S. manufacturers—Ford, GM and Chrysler—have gone on record to say that using *API-certified* re-refined oil will not affect warranty coverage.

Re-refined oil is a renewable energy resource designed to reduce the environmental impact of used oils, using only about one-third the energy it takes to refine crude oil to lubricant quality. It is made from used motor oil—the same stuff you drain from your engine and then take to a certified used motor oil recycling center. Call (888) CLEAN LA or visit [www.888CleanLA.com](http://www.888CleanLA.com) for the center nearest you.

Motor oil does not break down—it simply gets dirty. The re-refining process removes excess water and contaminants as new additives are mixed in. In this way the used oil is restored to its full and useful life with no compromise of quality. Test after test on re-refined oil proves that it is just as good if not better than virgin oil. It is subject to the same stringent refining, compounding and performance standards and API-licensed re-refined oils must pass the same cold-start, pumping ability, rust-corrosion, engine-wear and high-temperature viscosity tests as virgin oils.

While re-refined oil products are not as plentiful in supply as virgin oil products, their numbers will increase as the myths about re-refined oil are erased. A growing number of companies and public agencies are already using the product, including United Parcel Service; U.S. Postal Service; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans; Southern California Gas; County of Los Angeles, and many cities within the County; National Park Service and the NASCAR race circuit.

Additional information about re-refined oil can be found on the Integrated Waste Management's web site at <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/UsedOil/Rerefined/>.

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The team also has future plans of creating a materials waste exchange program, a collaboration with local restaurants to implement a food waste program and have begun preliminary steps to establish a take-back program for e-waste with the help of local retailers.

Jason has high hopes that Santa Clarita will continue to be a leader in environmental education and awareness. "After

three years at the pace we're on, we hope to go above and beyond the State's diversion mandates and reach a 75 percent diversion goal."

We applaud the efforts of Jason and Ben and the entire City of Santa Clarita for its efforts to help keep our environment clean. For more information on Santa Clarita's programs please call (661)286-4098.



*The diaper processing facility and the end products are shown above. A thousand pounds of diapers are processed every week which results in fibers and plastics that are used to make a variety of recycled products.*

# Greening the Earth Day

April Showers bring May flowers and at Greening the Earth Day on April 26, 2003, Pasadena residents learned how to make their gardens grow with the latest information on water conservation, composting and tree care.

On Saturday April 26, the City of Pasadena Department of Public Works and Pasadena Water and Power celebrated Earth Day 2003 by hosting a Greening the Earth Day at Paseo Colorado's Garfield Promenade from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Focusing on gardens, composting, waterwise landscaping and trees, the event brought together participants from the City of Pasadena Public Works, Pasadena Water and Power, Earthwise Friends, local garden clubs, Common Ground, Summit Avenue Neighborhood Association Community Garden, native plant societies and conservation organizations. The event was sponsored by Gelson's Market and the Paseo Colorado.

Hourly workshops were offered on backyard composting, vermicomposting and waterwise landscaping. The Garden Gourmet backyard compost bins were available for purchase and free promotional items, including seeds and plants, were given to all who attended.

For more information on future events in Pasadena please call 626-744-4721 or e-mail [cmuredith@ci.pasadena.ca.us](mailto:cmuredith@ci.pasadena.ca.us) or call the Water and Power Customer Care Answer Line at 626-744-6970.

## TASK FORCE MEETINGS

Meetings will be held at the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Headquarters, 900 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra.

**May 15**  
**June 19**  
**July 17**

**All meetings are scheduled for 1:00 p.m. in Conference Room B.**

For information call Stacey Haro at (626) 458-3547. M-Th, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

# What's Up?

**HHW ROUNDUPS** are open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. unless otherwise indicated. For more information, call the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, at **1(888)CLEAN-LA (253-2652)**. For information about City of Los Angeles events call **1(800)98-TOXIC (988-6942)**.

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 3                             | <b>San Dimas</b> - San Dimas Canyon Rd. Center, Corner of Bonita Ave. and San Dimas Canyon Rd.                                                             |
| May 10                            | <b>West Covina</b> - West Covina Maintenance Yard, 825 Sunset Ave.                                                                                         |
| May 17                            | <b>Palos Verdes Peninsula</b> - Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall/City Yard 30940 Hawthorne Blvd.                                                              |
| May 17-18                         | <b>Van Nuys</b> - Los Angeles Valley College 5800 Fulton Ave.<br><b>(Conducted by the City of Los Angeles)</b>                                             |
| May 31                            | <b>Pomona</b> - LA County Fair, Hotel and Exposition Complex, Gate 14A, Arrow Hwy.                                                                         |
| June 7                            | <b>Unincorporated South Whittier</b> - LA County Sheriff's Department, STAR Training Center, 11515 South Colima Blvd.                                      |
| June 7<br>9:00 a.m.-<br>2:00 p.m. | <b>Unincorporated West Whittier</b> - Apostolic Assembly of Whittier 5724 Esperanza Ave.                                                                   |
| June 14                           | <b>Pasadena</b> - The Rose Bowl, Parking Lot K 1001 Rose Bowl Blvd.                                                                                        |
| June 15                           | <b>Calabasas</b> - Calabasas Landfill 5300 Lost Hills Road                                                                                                 |
| June 21                           | <b>Torrance</b> - American Honda 1919 Torrance Blvd.                                                                                                       |
| June 21-22                        | <b>Woodland Hills</b> - Los Angeles Pierce College Parking Lot #4, enter on Mason Ave. from Victory Blvd.<br><b>(Conducted by the City of Los Angeles)</b> |
| June 28 - 29                      | <b>Sylmar</b> - Los Angeles Mission College Student Parking Lot, 13356 Eldridge Ave.<br><b>(Conducted by the City of Los Angeles)</b>                      |
| June 28                           | <b>Culver City</b> - West Los Angeles College Parking Lot 7, 4800 Freshman Dr.                                                                             |
| July 7                            | <b>Industry</b> - Industry City Hall Parking Lot 15651 East Stafford St.                                                                                   |



# SPRING INTO ACTION WITH SMART GARDENING

Looking to save time and money, water and energy, and at the same time have a great looking yard and garden? How about practicing Smart Gardening techniques as a way to help yourself as well as our environment? You can save time and money while doing something that makes Los Angeles County a nicer place to live and work. The Countywide Smart Gardening Program offers workshops for all County residents to learn about backyard composting, worm composting, grass recycling, water-wise gardening, and fire-wise gardening.

Backyard composting is a simple way to recycle yard waste and kitchen scraps into a nutrient-rich soil amendment. You can use compost in your yard and garden or as part of a homemade potting soil mix for house plants. Another simple way to make your own organic fertilizer is through the practice of worm composting.

All you need is a container filled with moistened bedding (shredded newspaper, coconut fiber, or peat moss), worms and fruit and vegetable scraps from your kitchen and yard. Worms can quickly eat the scraps and turn them into a rich organic fertilizer. Grass recycling is a natural approach to lawn care. Clippings are left on the lawn after mowing to decompose quickly, releasing valuable nutrients back into the soil.

While reducing waste, the technique of

water-wise gardening conserves water, energy and valuable resources. To reduce your risk from wild fires, why not begin from your yard and garden through fire-wise gardening techniques? These techniques will help to create a defensible perimeter around your house.

To learn more about these Smart Gardening techniques and upcoming workshops, please visit [www.smartgardening.com](http://www.smartgardening.com) or call toll free 1(888)CLEAN LA.

Did you know...

- Worms can eat approximately their body weight each day, making worm compost a rich, natural fertilizer.
- Your healthy lawn is one of the best oxygen producers you have. A 50-foot by 50-foot area produces enough oxygen for a family of four.
- The U.S. EPA estimates that the grass and trees along the U.S. Interstate Highway System release enough oxygen to support 22 million people.

A water-wise lawn and garden produces more than twice the cooling-effect of a typical home air conditioner, reducing surface temperatures by 30 to 40 degrees compared with bare soil, and 50 to 70 degrees cooler than streets and driveways.

